## *Preparation to Converſion*; Or, *Faith's Harbinger.*

In a rare *Epiſtle*, writ by a Perſon of Quality before his death, to his ſurviving Friends. *Shewing, That* Satan *prevails moſt by deception of our Reaſon: That the beauty of Holineſs and true Wiſdom is unſeen to the World: That ingrateful perſons are as witleſs as wicked: Why moſt men hear the* Goſpel *year after year, and are never the better.: With wholſom* inſtruction, *to prevent* deſtruction. *All richly fraught with choiſe and pithy* Sentences, Similitudes, Examples, Metaphors, Rhetorical *and pointed* Expreſſions. *Which being thought by many worth the Tranſcribing at no ſmall charge, is now committed to the* Preſs by *R. Young* of *Roxwel* in *Eſſex.*

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*Much Reſpected,*

IF you ask, Why I take this pains? Turn to *Levit.*19.17. *Heb* 3. 13. and you have there both my anſwer and warrant; for I do but ſupply with my pen, what I was bound to perform with my tongue. If for a Preſident? Take that of *Photian*; who, when a Friend of his would have caſt himſelf away, ſuffered him not, ſaying, *I was made thy Friend to this purpoſe.* And he that *loves* not ſuch a Friend, *hates* himſelf. If why I have been ſilent ſo long? Theſe are the only reaſons: Want of courage, fear to diſpleaſe; and leſt you ſhould think me to have had more *Zeal* then *Wit*, and more *Religion then Diſcretion*: A caſe too common; which makes me fear, that what *our Saviour* ſays *Mar.*8.38. *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, &c.* will prove a dreadful Text to a great many: For who almoſt does not make a very *Idol* of *Diſcretion*; and more fear the cenſures of *men*, then the diſpleaſure of *God?* Men owe *God* ſome good will, but (like thoſe *Rulers*, *Joh.*12.42.) they dare not ſhew it. They would *pleaſe him*, yet ſo as they might not *diſpleaſe others*, nor *themſelves*: Never conſidering, that he who bears with his *Friends* vices, makes them his *own*.

Now in caſe you ſhall (with thoſe Gentiles *Rom* 10.20.) receive more good by it then you deſire, admire the providence and free grace of *God*, who *will ſhew mercy to whom he will ſhew mercy*, Exod.33 19. Rom.9.15. That little which *Cræſus* learnt of *Solon*, ſaved his life: And had *Pilate* taken that fair warning his *wife* gave him, it might have ſaved his ſoul. Nor am I without hope to prevail with ſome of you; ſince *Nathan* wrought more upon *David* by one private particular Admonition, then all the *Lectures of the Law* could do for three quarters of a year together. However it were happy for millions, were they ſo plainly dealt withall.

Wherefore be perſwaded to *hearken a while unto me, as you would have Chriſt another day hearken unto you.* Which that you may do, I

will even refer the point to your selves to determine. As let me propound *your case* in the *person* of another, as the *disguised Prophet* dealt with *Ahab*, 1 *King*. 20. v. 39. to 43. Or as *Christ* dealt with the *Priests, Scribes* and *Elders*, Luke 20. v. 1, to 20. The case is this.

2 ¶ *God* in great love sent *Sampson* to deliver the men of *Judah* from the slavish thraldom of their enemies; but they in requital binde him (in whom all their hope of deliverance lay) and deliver him up to those enemies that kept them under; to the end they might *slay him*, and still *make slaves of them*, *Judg*. 15. Again after this, *God* sent unto their successors the *Jews*, *his onely Son*; to the end he might *heal* their *diseases*, *feed* their *bodies*, *inlighten* their *mindes*, and *save* their *souls*: And they in requital of all, hate, revile, scourge and crucifie him; though in killing him, they did their utmost to *split* or *sink* the onely *ship* that could save them. Two rare and remarkable Examples!

Now tell me what you think of these blockish *Jews*: Were they more *wicked*, or *witlesse*, or *ingrateful*? I know you will answer me, You *cannot tell*; as the *Priests, Scribes* and *Elders* did *our Saviour*, when the conscience of their own guiltinesse had stopt their mouths, *Luke* 20. 1, to 8. Or if you do make a satisfying answer, it shall be like *David's answer* to *Nathan's parable*, wherein he *pronounced* sentence of death *against himself*, 2 *Sam*. 12 1, to 8. For it is your very Case, if you had but eyes, or the wit to see it. I mean all you, who any way misuse, or are ingrateful to your *Ministers*; whom *God* out of his infinite love hath sent to be your *Deliverers* from the grievous slavery and *thraldom* you are in, under *Sin*, *Satan* and *Hell*. I know you think your selves *wise men*, and *Christians good enough*; yea, what but your high thoughts and good opinion of your selves, hath brought you to become *scorners of your Teachers* and *Instructors*, and more of their *godly instruction*? As *proud men* are wont to admire their own actions, but to abate the value and derogate from the esteem of others; every whit as basely to *vilifie other mens* doings, as they over-highly *prise their own*, as *Julian* observes.

But consider it rightly, and *this* alone (could you be taxed with nothing *but this*) not onely shews you to be *foolish* and *frantick*, but so *ingrateful* and *wicked* withal, as if *your wickednesse* and *unthankfulness* did *strive* with *Gods goodness* for the *victory*; as *Absalom* strove with *David*, whether the *Father* should be more *kinde* to the *son*, or the *son* more *unkinde* to the *Father*.

As what can you alleadge for your selves, or against your *Pastors*? Are they any other to you, then those *three Messengers* were to *Lot*, that came to fetch him out of *Sodom*, that he might not feel the *fire* and *brimstone* which followed? *Gen* 19. Or then the *Angel* was to *Peter*, that *opened the iron-gates*, *loosed his bands*, *brought him out of prison*, *and delivered him from the thraldom of his enemies*? *Acts* 12.

3 ¶ What wrong do they do you? They *beg* and *dig*, they *dig* and *beg*; as that good *Vine-dresser* did, whose *Mattock* kept off the Masters *Ax*, *Luke* 13. 8, 9. They *beat their brains*, they *spend their spirits*,

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*pour out their prayers*, plot and *contrive all they can to ſave your precious ſouls*, (were you but willing to be ſaved:) They bring you the glad tidings of *ſalvation*; would furniſh and endow you with the ſpiritual, invaluable, and laſting riches of *grace* and *glory*: They are content to waſte themſelves (like a *candle*) that they may *give light* unto, and bring others to *Heaven*, 1 *Cor.*9.19. 2 *Cor.*12.15. And do you, inſtead of *honoring*, *reſpecting* and *rewarding* them, *hate*, *traduce* and *perſecute* them? This is not for want of ignorance: For you ſhew juſt as much reaſon in it, as if thoſe *blinde*, *deaf*, *diſeaſed*, *poſſeſſed*, *diſtracted* or *dead* perſons ſpoken of in the *Goſpel*, ſhould have railed upon *our Saviour* for offering to *cure*, *reſtore*, *diſpoſſeſs*, *recover* and *raiſe* them again: And had not they great reaſon ſo to do? For ſhame think upon it: For did you know and rightly conſider, that you cannot be *nouriſhed* unto eternal life, but by the *milk* of the *Word*; you would rather wiſh your *bodies* might be without *ſouls*, then your *Churches* without *Preachers*: You would not, like ſo many *Mules*, *ſuck* their *milk*, and then *kick them* with your *heels*.

But this moſt plainly ſhews, that you are ſo far from knowing the *neceſſity* and *worth of the Word of life*, that you do not know you have *ſouls*; which makes you as little care for them, as you know them. Otherwiſe, how could you make ſuch a mighty difference between your *bodies* and *ſouls*? As had any of you but *a leg* or *an arm* putrified and *corrupt*, you would even *give money*, and think your ſelves *beholding* too, to have them *cut off*; Becauſe it is the onely way and means *to preſerve the whole body*. And if ſo, what love and thanks can be too much, that is expreſt to them, who would (would we give them leave) *pluck our Souls out of Satans clutches*, and bring us to eternal life? Nor can he ever be *thankfull to God*, who is not *thankfull to the inſtrument* or means by whom *God does*, or *would do* him *good*. Yea more, That man (I dare boldly affirm) cannot poſſibly have any intereſt is *Chriſts blood*, who is not forced with Admiration to ſay, *How beautifull are the feet of them that preach the Goſpel of peace, bring glad tidings of good things, and publiſh ſalvation! Rom.* 10.15. *Iſa.*52.7. But to prove and cleer this; ſee both *Examples*, and *Teſtimonies*.

4 ¶ First, Examples. The *Galatians* are ſaid to have received them as *Angels of God*, yea, even as *Chriſt Jeſus*; and that to pleaſure them, they *would*, *if it had been poſſible*, *have pluck'd out their own eyes*, *and have given the ſame unto them*, *Gal.*4.14, 15. and thought it their *duty*, *to communicate unto them in all their goods*, *Gal.*6.6. And likewiſe the *Romans*, *Rom.*15.27. Yea, by the Apoſtles teſtimony, we that are converted do owe even our own ſelves unto *our ſpiritual Paſtors*, *Phil.* 19. and the like of other *Churches*: Inſomuch that *Luther* (ſpeaking of the *Primitive times*, and of *Chriſtians* in general) ſays that ſo ſoon as the *Goſpel* took root in mens hearts, the glad tidings of ſalvation by *Chriſt* was ſo ſweet to them, that in compariſon thereof *riches* had *no reliſh*. And *Acts* 2.44, 45. and 4.34, 35. do ſufficiently confirm the

same. And indeed, who ever knew what *Conversion* and *Regeneration* was; who hath *tasted of the powers of the world to come*, and *enjoyed the joy of the Holy Ghost*, and that *peace of conscience which passeth all understanding?* but would rather have their *bodies* want *food*, and the *Firmament* want *light*, then that their *souls* should want that *light* and *spiritual food of the Gospel*, by which they are nourished and do live? For, far better be *unborn*, then *untaught*, as *Alexander* a meer Heathen could say.

That this is *the one onely thing necessary*, and which *Believers* prize above all, you may see by what holy *David* says of it, *Ps.*27.4. & 84. 1, to 11. & 119.103. *One thing have I desired, &c. Oh how sweet is thy word unto me, &c.* As turn but to the places, and see how he expresseth himself; for I may but touch upon things. And the like of *wise Solomon*, *Pro.*8.10. True, to you that are *strangers to*, and utterly *unacquainted with* these *soul-ravishing enjoyments*, these things will appear impossible; as the like did to *Nicodemus* touching *Regeneration*, *Joh.* 3.4. and to that *multitude of Jews* touching *Stephens vision*, when he told them how he *saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God in glory:* Which they were so far from believing, that it made *their hearts brast* for madness, to *gnash their teeth*, *stop their ears*, *cast him out of the city, and stone him to death*, *Acts* 7. 54, to 60. They could not possibly believe, that *he* should see what was *hid* to every one of *them*.

But this I can assure you, (even you my friends) beyond all exceptions; That if ever the *mask of prejudice* be taken from before your sight, or if your *eyes* shall be *opened* before you *drop* into *Hell*, you will have other thoughts of these things, and so of the Publishers of them, and be clean of another minde; yea, you will *loath what you* now *love*, and *love what you* now *loath*. Yea, I dare refer my self in this case to the very *damned in hell:* For what else made *Dives*, being in those *torments*, desire *Abraham*, that *one might be sent unto his brethren from the dead, to give them warning*, and to acquaint them with his success, but the alteration of his judgment? And you, know how that Reprobate *Balaam* wish'd to *die the death of the righteous*; though for the present he *preferred* and loved *riches* and *honor* before and *above his soul*. But,

5 ¶ Secondly, see *precepts* and *testimonies* to confirm it. Are we not commanded by the *Holy Ghost* to *have them in singular love, and count them worthy of double honor for their works sake?* 1 Thes. 5.13. 1 Tim. 5.17. Yea, the Apostles words are not only, *Let them that labour in the word and doctrine be accounted worthy of double honor*; but he adds, *He who preacheth the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*, 1 *Cor.* 9.7, to 15, saying also, *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all his goods*, *Gal.*6.6. Yea, if any man (saith he) does not communicate, and communicate in all his goods, *God is not mocked*, *v.* 7. So it falls, and I fear it *falls heavy on many* amongst us. Again says the same Apostle, *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?* 1 *Cor.*9.11. *Do ye not know, that they which minister*

*minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple? and they which wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar, &c.* v. 13, 14. Again, does he not say, that *our debt and duty* (he terms it not *benevolence*) to our *Spiritual Pastors* is such, as that *we owe unto them even our own selves*, *Phil.* 19. with a great deal more of the like, that he may meet with mens carnal reasonings in this case, which are not a few, 1 *Cor.* 9. All which is *New Testament* too, if obstinacy would permit men to take notice of it.

Thus you see how you ought to esteem and reward your *Ministers*; and how *Believers* do, and *have done*. Whereas you, (as if you were *Antipathites* to all *wisdom* and *goodness*) *hate*, *revile*, *slight*, *rob* and *persecute* them. Are you not ashamed of it? does it not make you tremble? yea, is it not enough to make you despair of ever finding *mercy at the Throne of Grace*, or of having *Christ* your *Redeemer* and *Advocate*? to whom, and for whose sake you do it, as I shall suddenly shew.

But you will say (for want of acquaintance with the *Word of God*, and your *own hearts*; as every Natural man is as great a stranger to his own heart, as *Hazael* was, who could not be perswaded by the *Prophet* that he should commit such abominable wickedness, as a while after it fell out;) *That you neither hate, nor persecute any one of them.*

To which I answer: What then makes you so *spightful*, in *spitting out your spleen* against them, when you but hear a *Minister* mentioned? What makes you so frequent in *slighting*, *scorning*, *and scoffing at them where ever you come*, and in all companies? What makes you pick so many holes in their coats, finde so many faults with them, raise so many objections (if not lies) against them; that nothing they either *do*, or *deliver*, can please you? As how many of your cavils and exceptions could I reckon up, that I have heard from your own mouths, if I would foul Paper with them? Yea, I could give you a large List of instances, and in your own expressions: But they are so *trivial*, *barbarous* and *base*, that I am *ashamed* to nominate them; and *no less unwilling*, *lest I should arm other mad men with your weapons.*

Now do but lay aside dissimulation, and speak the naked truth; and then say, whether all this proceeds not from *an heart* full *fraught with enmity* and *malice* against the *Ministery*, even for the very *graces of Gods Spirit* that shines in them? As it fared with that *Councel of Priests*, *Scribes and Elders* touching *Steven*, *Acts* 6. 15. & 7. 54. Do but examine your Consciences well, and you will not deny it.

6 ¶ Again, what makes you that are *so civil* in other cases, *so uncivil*, as not to afford them of all other men the common Title of [*Master such an one*] which you will not deny to a very Cobler? Can you tell me? No, I dare challenge the strongest brain'd *Achitophel*,

or the moſt fluent *Tertullus* amongſt you, to yield a wiſe reaſon there-of: except that which *God* hath ſet down, *Gen.*3,15. *I will put enmity between the ſeed of the ſerpent and the ſeed of the woman.*

But further to convince you, anſwer me another queſtion: What makes you to detain their dues from them, and not pay them a penny except you be forced to it? Or if you do for your *peace* or *credit* ſake, *any thing* is thought *too much* for your *Miniſter*; and what you part with, is drawn from you as ſo much *blood from the heart*. And then alſo you will baſely aſperſe him; at leaſt you will alleadge one thing or other to ſave your purſes; as, He had not my voice nor conſent when he was choſen; or, I hear at other *Churches*, and come not at him; or, I like not his preaching, or the like: As *any thing* ſhall *ſerve*, *to ſave your ſilver*, and to foreſtal you with prejudice, and make you reſolve againſt your own Converſion: For what is this, but to *pick ſtraws*, as it were, *to put out your* own *eyes* withal?

Yea, many they be, that will *pretend conſcience* (forſooth) *that they may rob their Miniſter*; and alleadge, That he hath taken Degrees, is Ordained, He is a Black-coat: Or rather which is the ſame in effect, He is a conſcientious Paſtor, or *Sheperd of Chriſts ſending*, and *not an Intruder*.

But leſt what hath been ſaid ſhould not prove ſufficient; how baſely will you calumniate him that but takes his Dues, eſpecially of a poor body? Miniſters, more then all the world beſides, muſt take *a teſtern* for *a ſhilling*. And not he alone ſhall ſuffer, but all theſe Church-men (ſay you) are ſo covetous, that they never think they have enough: when they have ſcarce enough to fill the bellies of their own families. All which not onely argues you as *brainleſs as beaſts*, but proves you to be as *full of the ſerpents enmity*, as the *egg of a Cockatrice* is *full of poyſon*.

Thus *every*, or *any thing* ſhall ſerve their turns, that ſtudy quarrels: Even as a *crooked ſtick* ſhall ſerve to *beat a dog*, when a *ſtraight one* cannot be found.

Now lay all together, and tell me whether this argues not *hatred*? if not, what can? For *love* (as the Apoſtle witneſſeth) *ſuffereth long, it is kinde, charitable, envieth not, doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly, ſeeketh not her own, is not eaſily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoyceth not in iniquity, beareth all things, endureth all things*, 1 *Cor.*13. Yea, love is ſo far from *finding faults where are none*, that (as *wiſe Solomon* hath it) it *covereth* or *paſſes over* all ſins, and *will not ſee them*, *Prov.* 10. 12. So that if you loved the Miniſters, as you will pretend you do, you would deal by them, as *the people* did by *Ulyſſes*; whom they ſo applauded for the acuteneſs of an *ingenious minde*, that they ſpared to object un to him his *bodily deformities*; Or if any one did ſhew the leaſt malignity towards him, that perſon was branded for a notorious wicked man, as *Homer* relates. And to ſpeak rightly, we need ſay no more of a man, then —— He is an Enemy to his faithfull *Paſtor*; that is enough to brand him: Nor can there be a greater argument of his being of *the brood of Cain*, *Haman*,

*Haman*, *Eliab*, *Michol*, *Doeg*, *Shimei*, *Ahab*, *Rabſhekah*, *Tobiah*, *Sanballat*, *Paſhur*, *Zedekiah*, *Elymus*, *Herodias*, and their fellows, then the hatred of good Miniſters. For ſuch men would do the ſame to *Chriſt himſelf*, were he their *Miniſter*. There was never any ſo *innocent* or *vertuous*, to whom ſuch *Belialiſts* took not exceptions; becauſe *they* are as deeply *in love with vice*, as *others* are *with vertue*. Yea, whom all men commend, you have ſome *Therſites* will take occaſion to blaſt. I'll give you *an ear-mark to know ſuch a one by*: whereas one of the modeſter ſort will alledge, his Miniſter is a *Presbyterian*, or an *Independent*, or a *Royaliſt*; this overgrown *Toad* will object, that he is a *Roundhead*; the meaning whereof is, a *Religious*, *Godly*, *Conſcientious* man.

7 ¶ But perhaps this is not your caſe. Suppoſe it be not; yet what I have before convicted you of, is ſufficient to prove you *a ſouldier belonging to that great Red Dragon, that fighteth againſt Michael and his Angels*, Rev. 12. *Who*, when his hands are bound, *caſteth a flood of reproaches out of his mouth againſt the Church, and the remnant of her ſeed which keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimonie of Jeſus Chriſt*, v.15,16,17. But you are not at all verſed in *Scripture*; therefore we'll come to *Reaſon*, and therein anſwer me a few queſtions.

Do you do by the *Miniſters* as you ought, or as you would be done by? Would you, when you have diſcharged your *duty* and *conſcience* to the utmoſt of your *endeavour*, have *ill conſtructions* made of your *beſt actions* and *intentions*? be rewarded with the *greateſt evil*, for the *greateſt good*; and the *greateſt hatred*, for the *moſt ſuperlative love*? (For, *love to the ſoul*, is *the very ſoul of love*.) Is this an evidence that you have them in ſingular reſpect for their works ſake? Is this to receive them as an *Angel of God*, yea, as *Chriſt Jeſus*? Is this to make them partakers of all your goods, and to be willing to pluck out your own eyes, and to give them if need were, as *God* commands, and as the *godly* have been willing to do? I think not.

Indeed, if you may be your own Judges, you will (during the time of this your prejudice) think all but little or nothing. But if the *Word of God* be conſulted with, it will be found *perſecution* in the higheſt degree: Like that of *Ahab* and *Jeſabel* to *Elias*; or that of *Herod* and *Herodias* to *John Baptiſt*; or that of the *Jews*, *Scribes* and *Phariſees* againſt *our Saviour*: for they did but expreſs their utmoſt ſpight to *Gods Meſſengers* that came to ſave them; and ſo do you. And this is a ſure rule: He that now under the *Goſpel* ſhews a ſpightfull and a malicious minde to a godly zealous *Miniſter*; if he had lived in *Chriſts* dayes, he would have been ready to have driven the firſt *nail into his body*, and rather have been for *Barrabas* then *Jeſus*. And *God* meaſures *what we do*, by *what we would do*, whether in *good* or *evil*. *Thoughts* and *Deſires*, in *Gods* account, are *good* and *evil works*: Neither does he *puniſh* or *reward* any thing but *the Will*.

Again, whereas you think not *Tongue-taunts* to be *perſecution*; you

ſhall one day (if you go on) hear it pronounced ſo, in your *Bill of Indictment*. *Iſhmael* did but *flout Iſaac*, yet *S. Paul* ſaith he perſecuted him, *Gal.*4.29. *God* calls the ſcorning of his ſervants by no better a name then perſecution. *Cham* did but *ſcoff* at *Noah*, yet that ſcoff brought his *fathers curſe* upon him, and *Gods upon that*. Even *the ſerpents hiſſing betrays his malice*. Thoſe *two and forty little children* (though but children) *were devoured of wild Bears, for only ſcoffing at the Prophets bald head*, 2 *King.* 2.24. A ſmall matter, if Senſualiſts may be Judge. But whatever you conceive of it, let all, even *heart and tongue-perſecution* be *as far from my ſoul, as my ſoul from hell*. For aſſuredly, *God* will one day *laugh you to ſcorn, for laughing his to ſcorn*; and at laſt *deſpiſe you*, that have *deſpiſed him in his Ambaſſadors*.

8 ¶ Again, you think it nothing, or no great matter to *detain the Miniſters maintenance*. But look narrowly into it, and you ſhall find it to be *theft, ſacriledge, murder*, yea *ſoul-murder*, and that in the higheſt degree: For you *rob the Miniſter* of what is as due to him, as any land of inheritance is to the owner. You *rob God* of his *Tythes, offerings, &c.* which he accounts moſt abominable; as you may gather from the many *complaints* and *threatnings* which *God* throughout all the *Old Teſtament* utters touching it. For which ſee only *Mal.*3.8,9,10,11. & 1.7,8,13,14. *Hag.* 1 & 2 *chap.* Hereby you make your ſelves guilty of *murder*: Firſt of *murdering your Paſtors body* and *whole family*; for if all ſhould be of your mindes, they ſhould ſtarve. Secondly of *your own*, and *all the peoples ſouls*, as much as in you lies: For how ſhould your *Paſtor feed your ſouls, if you feed not his body?* how ſhould the *lamp burn*, if you *take away the holy oil* that ſhould maintain it? and in caſe it *burn not*, there will be but a *dark houſe*. Men would have *fire kept in the Sanctuary*, but *allow no fewel*; they would have the *lamp burn*, but *without oil*. But how do they *ſerve Chriſt* & *themſelves, in ſo ſerving their Miniſters?* To take away the *Provante* from the *Army*, is to *betray it* to the *Enemy*.

And indeed, if you might have your wills, or if others were of your mind & temper, there ſhould be no Preaching at all, no ſouls ſaved, all go to hell. For, to expect that Miniſters ſhould *preach without maintenance*, yea *good maintenance*, (for to furniſh themſelves with *Books* only will coſt more then a little) is as if you ſhould *ſhut a Bird into a cage, give her no meat*, and yet *bid her ſing*. It amazes me to think how *unreaſonable* and *baſe* moſt men be: They will beſtow more upon their very *Hair* in a *moneth*, or upon the *Smoke* of a needleſs *Indian* wanton Weed in a *week*, then upon *God* and their *ſouls* in a *whole year*. And were it not moſt juſt with *God* to take away our *faithful Miniſters* from us, when we ſo ill intreat them, and ſo unworthily reward them? yea, ſince we *love darkneſs more then light*, may not *God* juſtly leave us in the dark? and bring upon us *a famine of Preaching*, who would bring *a famine upon the Preachers*, by purloining the maintenance of his Miniſters? It is but juſt with *God* to take away the *lamp* from that *Nation*, which hath taken away the *holy oil* that ſhould maintain it. But it is a true obſervation, *Sacriledge* is *the greateſt theft*, yet of it men make *the leaſt conſcience*.

But laſtly, You make your ſelves not only guilty of *perſecution, theft, ſacriledge*, of *murdering bodies* and *ſouls*, of *provoking God to ſend a famine of his Word*, and the like, but you become by it *guilty of high treaſon againſt God*, in thus uſing *his Ambaſſadors*, and againſt *Chriſt* and all *his members*. For beſides that all the diſgraces and wrongs that are done to *Chriſts Miniſters*, redound to him; and he that traduceth, or any way wrongs a Miniſter for the diſcharge of his place, his envy ſtrikes at the *Image of God* in him,

as

is a world of places prove: So the very *root or spring of this their spight* and enmity against the *Ministry*, is an inbred *enmity and hatred against God* himself. As when *Satan* slew *Jobs sons* and *servants*, his malice was against *Job*; Or as when *Saul darted a spear at Jonathan*, his spight was against *David*.

And accordingly, *God* takes what is done to his messengers, as done to himself; as in that case of *David* sending his Ambassadors to the King of *Ammon*, 2 *Sam* 10. 6,7. *They have not cast thee away*, says *God* to *Samuel*, *but they have cast me away, that I should not reign over them*, 1 *Sam.* 8. 7. *You are gathered together against the Lord; and what is Aaron, that ye murmure against him? Numb.*16.11. and the like *Exod.*16.7,8. *Luke* 10. 16. *Joh.*15.23,24. *Joh.*7.7. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me*, 1 *Sam.*17.45. *Isa.*37.23. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Acts* 9. 4. *Rev.*16.9.11. *Psal.*89.23.

9 ¶ Which being so, how does it behove you to look to your selves, and bewail this sin, this horrible and desperate sin! *Was there ever any that was stout against the Lord and prospered*, as *Job* speaks, *Job* 9. 4. When the *Pitcher* contends with the *Rock*, *straw* with the *fire*, it is easie to judge who will come by the worst. And certainly, if most men were not both *blinde* and *mad*, they would more respect the Ministry: For if I understand any thing of the *Word of God*, or know what *rectified reason* is, there is not a sin in the Nation that so *hinders the blessings*, or *pulls down the judgments of God* upon us, as does this very sin. And yet it is not more *provoking*, then it is *a common sin*. How it will be answered to their *Lord and master* at *the great day*, I tremble to think: Can you answer it *then* with *flashes of wit*, or *carnal reasons*, as you do *now*? I beseech you look to it. Nor is our *love*, or *hatred to God* any way better *known*, then by our *respect to*, *and usage of his Ambassadors*. *Lip-love* is but *lying love*. *If you love me*, *keep my commandments*, says our Saviour, *Joh.*14.15. Wherefore let my counsel be acceptable: *Break off your sins by repentance, kick no more against the pricks; Refrain your selves from these men and let them alone, lest ye be found even fighters against God*, *Acts* 5.38,39. Nor will it ever repent you, if you come in Heaven, that you were stopt in this your way to destruction. Yea, let the consideration of what you have already done, make you sink down with shame, and tremble for astonishment to think, that notwithstanding you have been so many years in arms against your *Maker* and *Redeemer*, and most spightfully and maliciously persecuted his *Ambassadors* that came to rescue you from the subtlety and slavery of *Satan*, *that bloody devouring Dragon*, and vowed enemy of all mankinde: yet *God* hath no taken the advantage of casting you into *Hell*, but of his never enough admired mercy hath spared you to this hour! whereas he might most justly have prevented all, in sending you *body* and *soul* into everlasting *torments*, when you were but a span long. For know this, that we need no more to condemn us, then what we brought into the world with us. Yea, we were *condemned*, so soon as *conceived*: And that you and I are not at this present frying in *Hell-flames*, never to be freed, no reason can be alleadged, but *O the depth!*

Where-

Wherefore take heed in time, and as you tender the good of your own souls, defer not a minute; but study and bestir your selves how you may make your peace with *God*. Yea, do it while the yerning *bowels*, the bleeding *wounds*, and compassionate *arms* of *Jesus Christ* lie open to receive you, whiles ye have *health*, and *life*, and *means*, and *time* to repent, and make your *peace* with *God*. As you tender, I say, the everlasting happiness and welfare of your almost lost and drowned *souls*: As you expect or hope for *grace*, or *mercy*, for *joy* and *comfort*, for *heaven* and *salvation*, for endless *bliss* and *glory* at the last: As you would escape the *direfull wrath* of *God*, the *bitter doom* and *sentence* of *Christ*, the never dying *sting* and *worm* of *conscience*, the *tormenting* and *soul-scorching* flames of *Hell*, and everlasting separation from *Gods* blissfull presence, abjure and utterly renounce this accursed sin. Oh, get an interest in *Christ*! For till we become members of his mystical body by *regeneration* and a lively *faith*; we (even the best of us) are as *Traitors condemned* to suffer eternal torments in *Hell-fire*, being onely *reprieved* for a time. O bless *God* all the dayes you live, yea, to eternity, that the *gate of mercy* yet *stands open!*

10 ¶ But withal take hold of the opportunity before the *Draw-bridge* be taken up, lest you never have the like again. Do not dally with *God* and *your own souls*; for if this warning be slighted, never look for the like: For warning (such a warning) not taking, is a certain presage of destruction, *Pro.* 29. 1. & 1. 24, 25, 26. The *sons of Eli would not hearken unto, nor obey the voice of their Father*: why? *because* (saith the Text) *the Lord was determined to destroy them*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *I know*, saith the Prophet to *Amaziah*, *the Lord hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not obeyed my counsel*, 2 *Chron.* 25. 16, 20. Whereas contrarily the *Ninevites* by hearkning to *Jonah*; and those very *murtherers of the Lord of life*, by listening to *Peter*, were *converted* and *saved*, *Acts* 2. 36, 37.

O take heed of preferring your own *carnal reason* before the *written word of God*: And that what is spoken of *Babel*, may not be verified in you; *We would have cured him, but he would not be cured*: lest you *be given up to destruction*, as she was. What sayes our *Saviour*? *This is the condemnation* (none like this) *that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather then light, because their deeds are evil*, *John* 3. 19, 20. Indeed, if you will rather beleeve *Satan*, or his *sollicitor the Flesh*, or be led by the perswasions of your *own* flattering *heart*, which is *deceitfull above all things, and most desperately evil*, *Jer.* 17. 9. No marvel you should be deaf to all hath been said, as thinking your selves already good enough, and then farwel all hope of being better; For the opinion of mens being wise, and good enough, is the sole and onely cause of their being no wiser, nor better. Yea, therefore are millions *Christians in name* onely, because they think themselves *Christians indeed*. And who is there in all this *Nation*, that thinks not himself a *Christian*? though they are able to yeild no reason except this; They are neither *Turks* nor *Jews*, nor (which is worse then either, as they suppose) *Roundheads*. A strong argument, I promise you, able to move the gentlest spleen alive to laughter! for the *Devil* can make as good a confession of his faith

as

as this. Yet all the reasonings of Carnal men are thus weighty: As let me give you a few instances.

11 ¶ They will say, they love and fear God as they ought: when what he commands, they do the contrary; are *flint* unto *God*, *wax* to *Satan*; have their *ears* always *open* to the *Temper*, *shut* to their *Maker* and *Redeemer*; when they are *Traitors to him*, and *take up arms against him*. A good sign they serve *God* and *Christ*, when *Satan*, the *World* and the *Flesh* have more command of them: When they are so far from loving and serving him, that they hate those that do it, and that for their so doing; and from fearing him, that they more fear the *worlds scorns*, then *his anger*. They will in like manner pretend they *love Christ* that died for them, when they *hate all that resemble him* in holiness. They are *Christians in name*, when they will scoff at a *Christian in deed*, and are *enemies to the cross of Christ*: Love a *form* of godliness, but hate *the power* of it. They will do what *God forbids*, yet confidently hope to *escape what he threatens*: will do the *Devils works*, yet look for *Christs wages*: Expect that *Heaven* should meet them at their last hour, when all their life-long they have gallopped in the beaten road towards *Hell*: Expect to have *Christ their Redeemer* and *Advocate*, when their consciences tell them that they seldom remember him but to *blaspheme him*, and more often name him in their *oaths* and *curses* then in their *prayers*: Will persecute honest and *orthodox Christians*, and say they mean base and *dissembling Hipocrites*; *think they do God good service in killing his servants*, *Joh.16.2.* as *Paul* touching *Stephen*, and the *Jews* touching *Christ*: Boast of a strong *faith*, and yet fall short of the *Devils* in *believing*, *Jam.2.19.* These are some of their *syllogisms* or arguings; I could even tire your ears with the like. But what doting, blockish and brain-sick Bedlam-*Positions* are these? Could rational men ever argue in this manner, had not *the God of this world blinded their eys*, *that the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ should not shine unto them*, *2 Cor.4.3,4. 2 Thes.2.9,10.* Did not their deceitfull hearts damnably delude them, as in that case of *Leah*, *Gen.30.18.* and of *Saul*, *1 Sam.23.7.21.* and of *Micah*, *Judg.17.13.* Turn to the places, for they are rare to this purpose. If this be Reason, it is *Reason frighted out of its wits*: Yet this is every wilfull sinners case, yea of every unregenerate man in some measure: As I'll but give you one instance more to clear it.

You shall have them maintain with *incredible impudence*, accompanied with *invincible ignorance*; That if a man make scruple of small matters, or of those sins or sinfull customs which they allow of, and will not do as they do, That he is over-precise: Though they may as soon finde *Paradise* in *Hell*, as any *Text* in the *Bible* that makes for *looseness*, or against *circumspect walking*. Yea, who would dream that so gross blockishness should find harbor in any reasonable soul, as to think that *God* should like a man the *worse* for his being the *better*, or for having a tender conscience; or look for less *fear*, *reverence*, and *obedience* from *his servants*, then we do from *our servants*? And yet the same men will grant, that a servant can never be too punctual in his obedience to his masters lawfull commands. But you see the reason;

Natural

Natural men are blinde to ſpiritual objects, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks 1 *Cor.* 1. 18.20. & 2. 14 and ſo no more fit to judge of them, then *blinde men* are fit to *judge of colours*. And hence it is, that they have the *baſeſt thoughts* of the *beſt men*, making *ill conſtructions* of whatſoever they *ſpeak* or *do*; as the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* dealt by *our Saviour*. Until we are born again, we are like *Nicodemus*, who knew not what it was to be born again, *John* 3.4. Until we become zealous our ſelves, we are like *Feſtus*, who thought zeal madneſs, *Acts* 26. 24. Until we be humble our ſelves, we are like *Michal*, who *mocked David* for his humility, and *thought him a fool for dancing before the Ark*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 16. For, to carnal-minded men, all *Religion ſeems fooliſhneſs*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 18. It faring between the *Senſual* and *Spiritual*, as it does between *Youth* and *Age*: For as *Young men* think *Old men* to be fools, but *Old men* know the *Young* to be fools; ſo *Worldlings* think the *Religious* fools, but the *Religious* know them to be fools, becauſe they have had the experience of both conditions; as the *old* have been *young*, but the other are utterly unacquainted with what they ſee and know. Beſides, the one make the *Word their rule* in every thing; for they *live*, and *believe*, and *hear*, and *invocate*, and *hope*, and *fear*, and *love*, and *worſhip God* in ſuch manner as his Word preſcribes: The other do all as the *fleſh* leads them, and *according to the cuſtoms and rudiments of the world*.

12 ¶ Now lay all together, and you will think it no whit ſtrange, that notwithſtanding their condition is ſo miſerable, they ſhould yet be ſo jocund, confident and ſecure, that they ſhould neither be ſenſible of their preſent condition, nor afraid of future Judgment. Security makes worldlings merry; and therefore are they *ſecure and merry*, becauſe they are *ignorant*. A *Dunce* (we know) ſeldom makes *doubts*; yea, a *Fool* (ſays *Solomon*) *boaſteth and is confident*, *Pro.* 14. 16. Ignorance is a veil or curtain to hide away their ſins. *Our knowledge*, ſaith one of the Learned, doth but ſhew us *our ignorance*: And *Wiſdom* (ſays another) is but one of mans greateſt miſeries, unleſs it be as well able to conquer, as to diſcern. The next thing from being free from miſeries, is, not to be ſenſible of them. *Eraſmus* could ſpie out a great priviledge in a blockiſh condition; *Fools* (ſaith he) being *free from ambition*, *envy*, *ſhame* and *fear*, are neither *troubled in conſcience*, nor *macerated with cares*. And *Beaſts*, we ſee, are not *aſhamed* of their deeds. Where is *no reaſon* at all, there is *no ſin*; where no uſe of reaſon, no apprehenſion of ſin; and where no apprehenſion of ſin, there can be no *ſhame*. *Blinde men never bluſh*; neither are Worldlings aſhamed, or afraid of any thing; becauſe for want of bringing their lives to the rule of *Gods word*, they perceive not when they do well, when ill. The *Timber* not brought to the *Rule*, may eaſily appear *ſtraight*, when yet it is not. Whereas every ſmall ſin, to a holy and regenerate man that weigheth his ſin by the *ballance of the Sanctuary*, is very grievous, and diſturbeth his conſcience exceedingly.

Beſides, the *Regenerate* know, that the very *end* for which they were *created* and *redeemed*, was, that they might *honour*, *love* and *ſerve their Creator*

*Creator & Redeemer.* They remember also, that they bound themselves by *vow* and promise *in their baptism* so to do. Whereas these brainless and brutish men *never* once *consider what they came into the world for, nor what will become of them when they depart hence:* Only their care is, that they may *eat, drink, play, sleep* and *be merry:* Whereupon *they spend their days in mirth, and suddenly they go down into hell,* as *Job* speaks, *Job* 21.13. For, like *men sleeping in a Boat,* they are *carried down the stream* of this *World,* until they *arrive* at their *Graves-end* Death; without once *making* to bethink themselves *whither they are going,* to *Heaven* or *Hell.*

I grant, that in their *long sleep* they have many *pleasant dreams.* As for instance: They *slumber,* and *suppose* themselves *good Christians, true Protestants;* they *dream* they *repent* them of their sins, and that they *believe* in *Christ;* they *dream* they have *true grace,* that they *fear,* and *love,* and *serve God* as they ought; they *dream they shall go to Heaven* and be *saved:* But the truth is, *all their Religion* is *but a Dream,* and so is their *assurance of salvation.* They have *Regeneration in conceit, Repentance* and *Righteousness* in conceit; they *serve God* well in conceit, and they shall *go to Heaven only in conceit, or in a dream;* and never *awake,* until they feel themselves *in a bed of unquenchable flames.* Neither did pure and naked Suppositals, ever bring any man to *eternal life.*

13 ¶ Which being so, and that with the greatest part of the World: How does it concern every one of you to try and examine your selves, whether it fares not so with you; and to mistrust the worst of your selves, as all *wise* and *sound-hearted Christians do;* as you may see by the Apostles, *Matth.* 26. 22. even every of them was jealous of himself, and examined his own heart, though but one of them was guilty of that foul sin which *Christ* spake of.

Now if you would *examine* your selves but by those *marks* I have already given you, you may easily see whether you are the men *guilty* of what I have laid to your *charge.* If you would be further informed, *ask your selves* only these three questions. *Whether you are of that small number, whom Christ hath chosen out of the world? Whether you are Regenerate? Whether you have true and saving faith?* For otherwise all your *hopes* and *perswasions* are but *vain presumptions* and *delusions.*

First, Are you of that small number? For, *the greatest number,* whether of *men,* or *great men,* or *great Scholars, go the broad way to destruction;* and but *a few* of either, *the narrow way which leadeth unto life;* as appears by many cleer *testimonies* and *examples;* for which see those known places, *Mat.*7.13,14. 1 *Joh.*5.19. *Rev.*20.8. *Christs flock,* that *believe the Gospel,* are but *a little flock, Luk.* 12. 32. and but *few in number, Isa.*10.22. & 53.1. *Rom.*9.27. & 10.16. *Rev.*3.4. 2 *Cor.*4.4. *Mat.*8.34. & 27.22. *Acts* 28. 22. *Rev.*13.16.

Yea, of all the CCLXXXVIII several Opinions which *Philosophers* held touching *the Chief good;* never any [illegible] to think the

way to attain to it, was by doing as the most do. Yea, they all concluded that *Number* was the *best note* of the *worst way*. And we even see by experience, that the *basest things* are ever *most plentifull*. And therefore it amazes me to think, how men should be so blockish as they are in this particular: for if you mark it, most men *walk in the broad way*, and yet every man *thinks to enter in at the strait gate*: which could never be, if they were not *fools*, or *frenzie*. Again take notice, that *many seekers fall short of heaven*, *Luke* 13. 24. Do you strive? *The righteous shall scarcely be saved; what then shall become of the unrighteous?* 1 *Pet.* 4.18.

14 ¶ Secondly, Are you regenerate and born anew? For *Christs* words to *Nicodemus* (a *knowing*, *honest*, *moral* man) are express; yea, and he bindes it with *an oath*: *Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye be born again ye can in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Now if you be regenerate, it will appear by this: *Regeneration* or *new-birth*, is *a creation of new qualities in the soul*, as being by nature onely evil, disposed. In all that are *born anew*, is a *change*, both *in the Judgement* from *error* to *truth*, and in the *Will* from *evil* to *good*; and in the *Affections* from *loving evil*, and *hating good*, to *love good*, and *hate evil*; in the *whole man from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.* Is this change wrought in you? For without it there is no going to *heaven*, no being *saved*. Then ——

Thirdly, Have you a true and lively faith in *Jesus Christ*? For there is no coming to *Christ* but by faith, *Heb.* 11. 6. *By faith we receive the forgiveness of our sins*, *Luke* 7.47,50. *By faith we are justified*, *Rom.*3.26,28,30. *Gal.*3.8. *By faith through grace we are saved*, *Eph.*2.8,9. *Luk.*18.42. *By faith through the power of God we are kept and preserved to salvation*, 1 *Pet.* 1.5. Nothing but *faith* can *assure us of Gods favor*, *Eccles.* 9. 1. 2. 3. *By faith we obtain whatsoever we ask*, *Mat.*21.22. *By faith we are blessed*, *Gal.*3.14. *By faith we know God*, 1 *Joh.*4.7. *Psal.*9.10. *Without faith we cannot profit by hearing the Word*, *Heb.*4.2. *Without faith it is impossible to please God*, *Heb.* 11. 6. *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin*, be they never so glorious performances, *Rom.*14.23. and 10.14.

Now you shall know whether you have faith, by this: *Faith comes by hearing* the Word preached, *Rom.*10.17. And the *Spirits powerfull working* with it, *Iob.*3.3. 5.8. *Faith purifieth the heart*, *Act.*15.9. *worketh by love*, *Gal.*5.6. and *sanctifieth the whole man throughout*, *Act.*26.18. *Faith* is known *by its works*, *Iam.*2.17. 18.22. *Faith* and *holiness* are as inseparable as *life* and *motion*, the *sun* and *light*, *fire* and *heat*. Again, Faith believeth the *threats* of the Word, together with the *promises*; and thereupon *feareth sin*, as it *fears hell*. Again, if the *Image of God* by faith be repaired in you, you cannot but *love them that love God*, 1 *Joh.*3.10.

Besides, this is a sure rule: That that *perswasion* only which *follows* sound *humiliation*, is *Faith*; That which *goes before* it, is *Presumption*. And as *Ambrose* speaks; No man can *repent of sin*, but he that *believes the pardon of sin*; nor none can believe his sins are pardoned, except he hath repented. Lastly, how easie a matter soever men think it is to *believe*; he that goes

about

about it, shall finde it as *hard* a work *to beleeve the Gospel, as to keep the Law*: And onely *God* must enable to both.

Now if upon trial you evidently finde that you are of *Christs little flock*, that you are *regenerate*, and that you have this precious grace of *Faith wrought in your heart*, you may comfortably assure your self that you shall be saved. Otherwise the *Devil* and *your own heart* do but *delude you*, in promising you the least benefit by the *blood of Christ*: Yea, it had been better for you, that there had been no *Christ* come into the world: For, even the *mercy of God*, (which you have contemned) and the *means of grace*, and the *offer of salvation*, shall but inhance your *damnation*. Yea, *Christ* himself that onely *Summum bonum*, who is *a Saviour to* all *Beleevers*, shall be a *just Revenger* to you, if you go on; and bid you *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire*, &c. *Matth.*25.41.

15 ¶ And so much, for the discharge of my conscience and duty; and to make a supply of that, which I should have some way performed long since.

Yet least I should imitate those, who *kindle a fire under green wood*, and *leave it* so soon as it begins to *flame*; (for I take it for granted, that some of you will lay to heart what hath been said) I have sent you *three Books* (writ by an impartial Author, not a Party) which I hold exceeding profitable for you to peruse. The one speaking more home and full to this matter. The second shewing how it comes to pass, that so *many* are *deceived, who hope to be saved.* The third setting out to the life, the very *thoughts, words*, and *actions* of all natural men; insomuch that no *glass* can more lively *represent your faces*, then it does *your hearts*. Therefore that you may not be *disappointed of your end, by mistaking your way*; that you may become as *true friends to God*, and the *Ministry*, as you have been *bitter enemies*; and so have your part and portion with them *at Gods right hand, where are pleasures for evermore*: Be perswaded to read them, with as much *observation* and *circumspection*, as you would do the *Evidences of your Inheritance*. Neither count it as a thing *indifferent*, that may either *be done*, or *dispensed with*; except you are *indifferent* whether you be *saved* or *damned*. Yea, so minde what you read, as if it were *an Epistle writ from Heaven*, and *sent to each of you* in particular. Expect not that *Christ Jesus* himself from *Heaven* should call to you severally by name, as he did to *Saul*, and say, *Ho Ishmael!* such a one; or *Ho Elymas!* such a one; *why doest thou persecute me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*, *Acts* 9. 4, 5. Which yet, if he should, it were no more in effect then he hath often done; nor would you be any more warned, or reclaimed by it. As is evident by the example of *Hazael*, 2 *Kings* 8.12, 13, &c. And by what *Abraham* told *Dives*, *Luk.*16.31. *If you will not beleeve Moses and the Prophets, Christ* and his *Apostles* in his *Word*; *neither would he be perswaded, though one should be sent unto you from the damned in hell*, or from the *glorified spirits in heaven*. Wherefore *hearken unto Conscience*; and what *concerns you, apply it not to others*, as the most do. Do not like *a Childe*, that beholding his *own face in a glass, thinks he seeth another childes face*, and not his own. *Want of Application*

*cation* makes *all Means* ineffectual. Yea, there are very few men that make not the *whole Bible* and *all* the *Sermons they hear*, yea the *checks of their own Consciences*, and the *motions of Gods Spirit* utterly *ineffectual*, for want of *wit* and *grace* to apply the same to themselves. Whereas if they would rightly and ingenuously apply but one Text or two unto their own souls, as they can unto others, (being *better* able to *discern others moats* then *their own beams*) they might be everlastingly happy.

16 ¶ But it is now *a just plague* upon our so much *Formality* and *Profaneness*, under our *so much means* of Grace; that because we (many of us) have *heard the Word*, and enjoyed the means for *thirty*, *forty*, *fifty years* together, and are *never the better*, bring forth no fruits thereof; that *Christ* should say unto such, as he did to the *fruitless Fig-tree*, *Mar.* 11.13,14. *Never fruit grow on thee henceforward.* And the truth is, if yon observe it, you shall very rarely hear of *an old Formalist*, or *Protestant at large*, that ever is converted, (but young ones, as *Ministers* can sufficiently inform you:) Perhaps they may turn to be *Antinomians*, *Ranters*, *Quakers*, or the like, and *imbrace Error*; but they turn not to the *Truth*. Or if so, it is *a greater miracle* then was the *creating of the whole world*. For, in making such a one a *New creature*, must be a *number of miracles*: A *blinde man* is *restored to sight*, a *deaf* man to *hearing*, a man *possest with many devils dispossest*; yea, one not only *dead in sin*, but *buried* in the *grave of long custom*, with *a grave-stone laid upon him*, *raised* from the dead; and in every one, *a stone turned into flesh*. In all which *God* meets with nothing but *opposition*, which in the *Creation* he met not with.

Thus I have been large: But as *John* could only *baptize with water*, so I can but *teach* you *with words*; And when *God* withholds his consecrated grace, *Paul* himself cannot move *a soul*. If the *Holy Ghost* shall set it home to your hearts, that you may so *meditate* on what hath been spoken, and so *practise* what hath been prescribed; that *God* in *Christ* may be *pacified*, your sins by free-grace *pardoned*, and your souls eternally *saved*: That while you are *here*, you may enjoy the *peace of God which passeth all understanding*, *Phil.* 4.7. and when you *depart hence*, you may *arrive at the Haven of all happiness* in *Heaven*, where is *fulness of joy*, *and pleasures for evermore*; *Blessed* and *happy* are ye, *Psal.* 16. 11. Which is my *prayer* and *hope*, and should be my joy.

*FINIS.*

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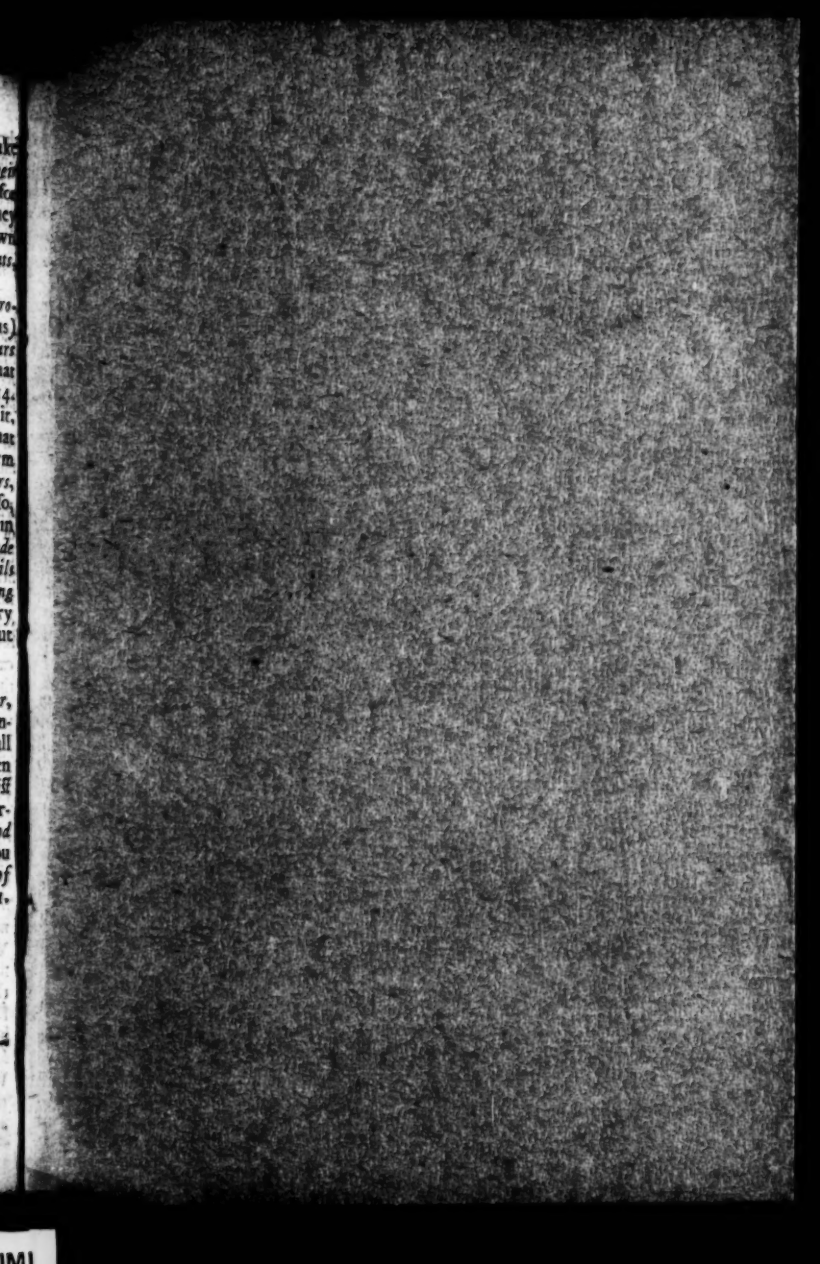
*London*, Printed by *Thomas Newcomb*, and are to be sold by *James Crump* in Little *Bartholomews* Well-yard, and *Henry Cripps* in Popes-Alley. 1658.